

Subject: Re: Southwest Area Transport Plan public teleconference?

Date: Mon, 06 May 2002 10:09:41 -0800

From: Eric Taylor <eric_taylor@dot.state.ak.us>

Organization: State of Alaska

To: The Seldovia Herald <s2lewis@alaska.net>

CC: Rex E Young JR <rex_young@dot.state.ak.us>, Jim Potdevin <jim_potdevin@dot.state.ak.us>, Charles K Vankirk <chuck_vankirk@dot.state.ak.us>, Jeffery C Ottesen <jeff_ottesen@dot.state.ak.us>, Jennifer E Wilson <jennifer_wilson@dot.state.ak.us>, Jack D Melton <jack_melton@dot.state.ak.us>

Dear Savannah:

Just a quick note to clarify what Rex Young meant to say about the May 7 SW call-in and then a brief explanation of the Southwest Transportation Plan with reference to Seldovia service.

May 7 call-in for Statewide plan, not Southwest

The May 7 call-in is for the **Statewide** transportation plan. It will be aired at 10:00 am AST on the Alaska Public Radio Network (APRN) broadcast and will feature DOT&PF Commissioner Joe Perkins and Statewide Planning Director Tom Brigham. We try to be careful of that nebulous "SW" abbreviation, but acronyms die hard in government circles, as you are probably well aware. Anyhow, info for *Vision: 2020* Update (the Statewide Transportation Plan) is on this link:

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/areaplans/v2020.html>

We are accepting public comment through June 14.

We have not planned a public hearing in Seldovia concerning the Southwest Transportation Plan. Here's why:

Southwest Plan does not reduce Seldovia AMHS service

The Southwest Plan intends to keep Seldovia service at current levels or better. The plan's main thrust with regard to *Tustumena* is to **shift service from Prince William Sound to Southwest Alaska** following the implementation of high speed ferry service within Prince William Sound. The Southwest Plan suggests two possibilities for the added service:

- More trips between Kodiak and Unalaska, and
- More trips between Kodiak and the mainland

Concerning the latter option, the plan suggests these added runs should be between Kodiak and Homer, rather than Kodiak and Seward, because of the shorter distance. For the time and expense of three round trips from Kodiak to Seward, we can make four round trips from Kodiak to Homer. Since either destination generates the same average revenue per trip, it makes sense to concentrate frequency between Kodiak and Homer, where the ferry can move more people and vehicles in a given time period and thus generate more revenue. With added trips between Kodiak and Homer, we would expect Seldovia to see more service as a result, not less.

The draft plan did contain an error in the guiding principles listed on page 20. It states that "Service between Homer and Seldovia should be maintained as a stop on service between Kodiak (and Port Lions) and Homer." Not true. In order to maximize "through" traffic between Kodiak and the mainland, a separate run from Homer to Seldovia should be made, just as we do now. The final plan will correct the error. In addition, we recognize the difficulty with interpreting the Tables 5 and 6 (pp. 20-21) in the draft Southwest Plan, and will be reformatting them in the final version.

Actual scheduling remains an operational issue, not a planning one. The plan advances what our analysis indicates is a worthwhile, feasible and efficient allocation of the State's transportation resources. But we can

only accomplish what the legislature will fund us to do, and they have significantly underfunded the Marine Highway System for eight consecutive years now.

The plan recommends significant improvements to the road between Pile Bay and Williamsport, but does not make any recommendations regarding ferry service to Williamsport or Pile Bay.

Thank you for your interest. Let me know if I can assist you further.

Sincerely,
Eric Taylor

The Seldovia Herald wrote:

Mr. Taylor:

When Rex Young of your Kenai planning office was in Seldovia last week for the Economic Development Forum, he mentioned a statewide teleconference on the SW plan as being scheduled for May 7, and said that details would be on the plan web page.

I am not able to locate these details. They are a matter of considerable interest to our readers, however, and we would like to be able to point to them. As Seldovians are reading the plan in its current draft version, it appears that service to Seldovia is left out of the plan in favor of Pile Bay. Since ferry service is viewed as essential to the Seldovian economy, this is clearly of disastrous import locally and worthy of comment.

Is there indeed going to be a public hearing in a forum in which Seldovians may be heard? I would appreciate any information on this that you can provide, and will pass it along to our readers. We publish weekly, on Thursdays, if that is of any assistance to you in timing your reply.

Thank you very much for your assistance,
Savannah Lewis
Editor and publisher
The Seldovia Herald
<http://www.alaska.net/~s2lewis/sovnews.html>

--

We have spoken in a very enlightened manner, but we have not always lived as the salt of the earth. Whether we like it or not, our lives should always be the first thing to speak; and if our lips speak more than our lives it will avail very little. So often the tragedy has been that people proclaim the gospel in words, but their whole life and demeanour has been a denial of it. The world does not pay much attention to them.

-D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

[Eric Taylor](mailto:eric_taylor@dot.state.ak.us) <eric_taylor@dot.state.ak.us>

Area Transportation Plans
Division of Statewide Planning
Alaska DOT&PF